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MATERIEL OF THE FIRST AMERICAN LIGHT ARTILLERY, 1808-1809

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The material here presented is intended to bring into focus the related portions of William E. Birkhimer's classic *Historical Sketch of the . . . Artillery, United States Army* (1884) and to offer a reconstruction of the first, and quite experimental, United States Light Artillery company, commanded by Captain George Peter of Georgetown, D. C.¹ One of the colored plates (No. 58) in the "Military Uniforms in America" series is also devoted to this company and is described in this issue.

In addition to the information furnished by Colonel Birkhimer, use has been made of those pertinent contemporary texts which shed light on the theories and practices of artillery transport from the years of the Revolution, up to and including the advent of Captain Peter's innovational command on the military scene.² It was largely in the self-sustaining mobility, with a corresponding increase in maneuverability, that the new unit was unique in the Army. Intrinsic to the success of the unit was "a proper set of harness". It is hoped, by means of this presentation, to pierce the obscurity surrounding that essential part of the equipment of the Light Artillery of 1808 and to offer a plausible reconstruction.

The Act of 12 April 1808 provided for the organization of a Regiment of Light Artillery to consist of a staff and ten companies. The staff comprised 1 colonel, 1 lieutenant colonel, 1 major, 1 adjutant, 1 quartermaster, 1 surgeon, 1 surgeon's mate, 1 sergeant major,

1 quartermaster sergeant, and 2 principal musicians. Each of the ten companies contained 1 captain, 1 first lieutenant, 1 second lieutenant, 2 cadets, 4 sergeants, 4 corporals, 2 musicians, 8 artificers, and 58 matrosses.

The Act did not make specific provisions for mounting the regiment. In spite of this omission Secretary of War Dearborn proceeded with plans and instructions to put at least part of the newly authorized organization on a mobile status. It is obvious that he hoped, by staging a creditable exhibition in the National Capital, to influence the Congress toward providing for the proper equipping and mounting of the entire regiment. Possibly he also hoped for an increase in the enlisted personnel authorized for each company, which would have been necessary properly to man the contemplated six piece batteries on the basis provided in his letter to Captain George Peter, senior captain of the new regiment, quoted below.

War Department, 6 May 1808

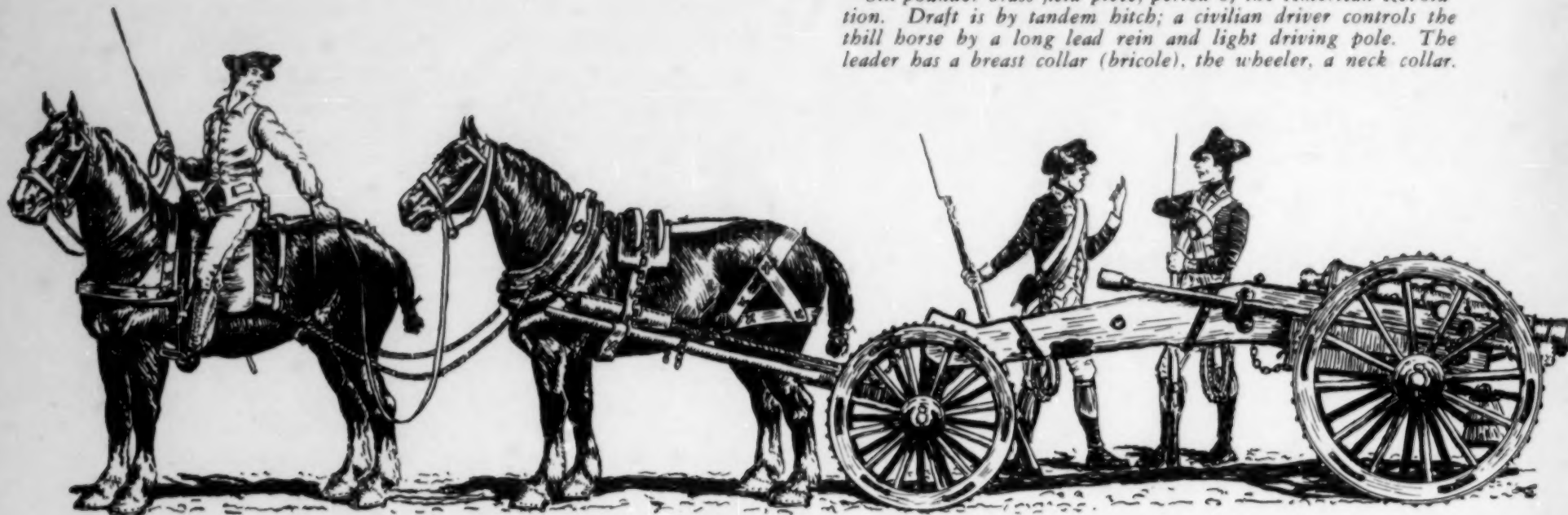
Geo. Peter — Sir: As soon as you can have two six-pounders properly mounted, with one ammunition wagon, and one light horse wagon for conveying four men besides the wagoner, prepared for service, I will order the purchase of a sufficient number of horses for making an experiment with one field piece, its ammunition wagon containing say, fifty cartridges, ten of which ought to have round shot, and ten of grape or cannister. The officers, with one sergeant and three men on horseback, and four men in the light wagon are to proceed at the rate of five or six miles an hour, from Baltimore to this city, and to make some experiments at this place by maneuvering the cannon in different directions. . . . For one six-pounder, one ammunition wagon, and for the officers and others on horseback, it will I presume, require from thirteen to sixteen horses. I wish you to endeavor to have sufficient number of men well trained to the business before the general experiment is made.

On 16 May, just ten days after the letter quoted above was written, Captain Peter reported that the requisite number of horses were in training and that carriages, harness, saddles, bridles, etc., would be ready in a few days. The successes attending the performance of the unit are well known, as are the subsequent for-

¹ George Peter, who ran off to war at 15 and was sent home by George Washington, had been a Regular Army officer since 1799. Resigning in 1809 he returned to Georgetown where, in May 1813, he formed the Corps of Georgetown Field Artillerists. His service at Bladensburg constituted one of the few bright spots of the battle.

² The most important of these treatises are John Müller, *Treatise of Artillery*, London, 1756; William Stevens, *System of Discipline for the Artillery*, New York, 1797; Jonathan Williams, "Notes", in *Kosciusko's Manual*, New York, 1808; and Louis de Tousard, *American Artillerists' Companion*, 3 vols., Philadelphia, 1809-1813.

Six-pounder brass field piece, period of the American Revolution. Draft is by tandem hitch; a civilian driver controls the thill horse by a long lead rein and light driving pole. The leader has a breast collar (bricole), the wheeler, a neck collar.



6 ft.

tunes of Peter's command. Completely equipped and mounted during the fall of 1808, it made an arduous but eminently commendable movement, in dead of winter, over land and by water, to New Orleans, then suffered the ignominy of being de-horsed by Dearborn's shortsighted successor, Eustice, in the summer of 1809.

Before taking up the details of equipment and organization of the experimental unit, consideration should be given to that portion of contemporary artillery doctrine concerning light (horse) artillery, and to the very real influence exerted by Secretary Dearborn during his tenure of office, 5 March 1801-7 March 1809.

In the spring of 1808 the standard text being used by artillery officers was that written by William Stevens and published in New York in 1797. Intended primarily to serve the needs of the militia artillery, it did not treat of the maneuvers of light artillery. Prior to 1800 Inspector General Alexander Hamilton and Major General Pinckney had prepared a suitable set of instructions for the regular artillery, but these were never published and are presumed to have been lost in the 1814 burning of the War Office. Secretary of War McHenry's endeavors to introduce the German horse artillery system had proved equally fruitless.

In the year 1800, General Kosciusko, then in Paris, had written a manual for the service of horse artillery at the request of General W. R. Davie, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States. The manual, in French, and consisting mainly of unillustrated descriptions of thirty movements or maneuvers, was presented by General Davie to the United States Military Philosophical Society at West

Point. In 1808, at the request of the donor, this work was translated, annotated, and illustrated by Colonel Jonathan Williams, Colonel Commandant of the Corps of Engineers, Superintendent of the United States Military Academy, and President of the Philosophical Society. Although several hundred copies were ordered for distribution to troops by Secretary Dearborn, publication did not take place until September 1808. In a letter dated Washington, 28 October 1808, President Jefferson thanked Williams for his copy: "I thank you for the copy of Gen. Kosciusko's treatise on the flying artillery. It is a branch of the military art which I wish extremely to see understood here to the height of the European level." But, as with Louis de Tousard's *American Artillerists' Companion* (begun in 1795 and not published until 1809), the Williams translation of Kosciusko's manual was not available to Captain Peter in printed form for the initial indoctrination of his men.

In spite of the lack of a printed text it is safe to assume that the general practices and maneuvers of horse artillery were fairly well known to, and matters for discussion among the small coterie of those interested; the younger and energetic professional "gunners" of the regular artillery, a few farsighted and open minded men among the older regulars, and not just a few of the equally ardent and equally intelligent militia artillerymen. Notes and descriptions similar to the texts referred to above must have inevitably found their way into the hands of such men. The organization of two troops of flying artillery in New York City as early as 1806 is evidence of the intense interest stimulated by

the successes of the new arm in Europe. That this interest and knowledge was confined to a relatively small group is best indicated by the comments of Williams in his introduction to Kuscusko's manual:

When this improvement in artillery was first announced many strange ideas were suggested: At first it was thought that a gun on its carriage was adapted like a saddle to a horse's back, and in this way it was literally mounted artillery. Afterwards it was supposed that a pair of thills was fixed to the trail, and that the horse was harnessed in them like the thill horse of a cart . . . and even now it is by many supposed necessary to have artillery made on purpose to be used with horses and that such artillery cannot be used in any other way. But the truth of the matter is that every field piece now fit for service, may be used in horse artillery with no other change than a few fathoms of rope [for the prolonge] and a proper set of harness.

This last sentence provides a cogent introduction to a discussion of the developments in material that had been accomplished prior to 1808.

In 1800 the War Office had ordered the translation and publication of a text and companion plates on the Gribeauval system for materiel, written by DeScheel. The translation of this was also done by Jonathan Williams. Although the DeScheel guns, and particularly the carriages, were of the earlier Gribeauval pattern, and without many refinements and fittings subsequently developed, his work did provide comprehensive and detailed information on the materiel system.

No where is Secretary Dearborn's control and influence more clearly shown than in the materiel changes wrought by him during his eight years in office. As early as 1801 he had ruled that one standard light field

piece, a cast iron six-pounder, would be used in the American service instead of the bronze or brass fours, sixes, and eights of the French system. His vehement advocacy of cast iron over bronze was based on sound reasoning. Proof firing of properly founded cast iron cannon had established their reliability. The price of bronze was five to six times that of iron. Iron of the best quality was being produced in this country at that time, while only a small amount of copper was produced and no tin, an essential ingredient of proper "gun metal." By using iron, economic conditions were met, and the country could rely on native resources for metal. Although Davie advocated four- and six-pounders in his introductory letter to the Kuscusko manual, Williams, in his translator's notes, was in accord with Dearborn on the desirability of a single caliber, the six-pounder. The cast iron guns actually produced in America and issued to Peter were "sixes," fourteen calibers in length, and equal in weight to a bronze gun of the same caliber.

The gun carriages were a unique type, a distinctly "Dearborn type," developed on his orders, through the gradual adoption of most of the early Gribeauval characteristics to the basic Müller type carriages used during the Revolution. Birkhimer states that Dearborn did not appreciate the "soul of the Gribeauval system" because he failed to include the principle of interchangeable parts in his modifications. In spite of that omission the eight year metamorphosis produced, in the "Dearborn type," carriages that were almost identical with the earlier Gribeauvals.



Six-pounder cast iron field piece of the "Dearborn type" showing the marked reduction in size of the main members by the late fall of 1808

The first step, in 1801, was to reduce the weight by approximately thirty percent through reduction in thickness and width of the main wooden members, by reshaping the spokes (later this was also done for the fellies), and by a reduction in size of most of the iron work and the elimination of such decorative details as the rose type bolt heads. The wooden axle remained unchanged at first but was subsequently replaced by one of wrought iron, encased in wood, with composition boxes. The screw type elevating mechanism had been in use to a limited degree as early as the Revolution and was continued with a modified and lighter bed. Two shorter and lighter trail handspikes replaced the single heavy tiller of the Müller carriages. Although not applicable to the six-pounder carriage, traveling trunions and fulcrum brackets for the lifting bars were added to the heavier carriages during this same period.

Dearborn was not convinced that the French pent-house ammunition box carried between the trail flasks (placed on the limber, between the guides, when in action) offered any advantage over the older side boxes of the Müller carriages, thus the side boxes were retained. For a six-pounder each of the four boxes measured twelve inches wide, twenty-four long, and six deep. They were carried in pairs on each side of the trail, with the front end of the lower (shot) boxes abutting the rear of the axle housing, and the upper (cartridge) boxes strapped to the lower boxes. In action the boxes were removed and placed three paces in the rear of the ends of the trail hand spikes, fronts of the boxes to the rear, the opened lids serving as shields against possible premature bursts.

The old thill (shaft) type limber, with its single horse or tandem hitch was replaced by the single pole, or tongue, type limber to which horses were hitched in pairs. This type of draft had long been in use for heavier artillery vehicles (traveling carriages for siege guns, sling carts, bateau beds, etc.), but for the field gun it was new. In the artillery proper this change further signified the passing of the thilled tumbrils and powder carts in favor of the caissons, or ammunition wagons.

The new gun limber with its pole and attachments differed from the early Gribeauval pattern for a four-pounder only in that the cross bars on the guides were not arched on the upper (bearing) surfaces. While the flat surface did not facilitate sharp turns, as did the French arched surface, it did minimize the tendency to snap the safety chain and unseat the trail from the pintle when negotiating vertical obstacles such as ditches, logs, and stumps. This consideration of the rough

character of American roads and the even rougher American terrain, as compared to the European, appears again in the adaptation of the maneuvers for light artillery; mounted gun crews following the gun carriages "in trace" rather than flanking the gun team, as did the French; and the use of either a doubled, or loop shortened, prolonge hitch, in place of the twenty-five to thirty-foot single, long span common to the light artilleries of European armies. Williams recommended such changes in his translator's notes, and they were subsequently incorporated in Stoddard's 1812 adaptation of Kuscusko's manual for the American service.

The ammunition wagon (caisson) was of the pent-house type with a sloping topped locker projecting in front of the fore carriage bolster, a spare pole carried in brackets on the off (right) side, and a spare gun wheel carried on a forty-five degree sloping axle-pintle in the rear. The hinged lid of the ammunition chest opened from the near (left) side for ease of access to the compartmented ammunition trays. This lengthwise opening had generally replaced the far more inconvenient rear doors of earlier days. No evidence has been found that there was any deviation from the De-Scheel pattern of the Gribeauval for this carriage.

The "light horse wagon," another distinctly "Dearborn type" when considering its proposed use, was in all probability a springless light market wagon with low paneled sides, a slightly higher dash, two removable cross seats, and a folding, slatted, forage rack hinged to the tailgate. There could have been a small jockey box in addition to the above. An American made vehicle of the late 18th century examined by the writer has these features with the usual rigid tongue to which a spreader bar is secured by ring- and U-bolts. The singletrees have notched ends, indicating rope or slit-leather traces, as on the earlier Gribeauvals, and are fastened to the splinter bar by leather rather than iron bracelets and rings. Splinter bar stays are also made of leather instead of bolts or chains. This use of leather was intended to save weight and was more often seen in light carriages than in wagons. There can be but little doubt that, with this vehicle, the Secretary was improvising or, as his letter implies, just experimenting in an effort to exercise the economy in horseflesh mistakenly claimed for the Wurst caisson without acquiring the inherent disadvantages of the latter. A Wurst (as it was usually termed) was the military adaptation of the *Wurst de chase* used during the middle of the 18th century to transport hunting parties. As a caisson, the Wurst carried four or six men astride the saddle-shaped top of the ammunition chest, half facing forward, half

to the rear, feet in stirrups or on a foot rest. The front and rear man had short upright posts to hold on to. Each of the others held on to the man immediately in front. The entire carriage was on springs for easier riding. As far as Colonel Jonathan Williams was concerned, the spring suspension was the only redeeming feature, in that it also conserved fixed ammunition by reducing the jolting action found in a springless caisson.

Dearborn's objections to Wursts may have been based on the same disadvantages cited by Williams: the amount of ammunition carried must be reduced by the weight equivalent of the men mounted on the chest or the number of horses had to be increased proportionately. In a rapid withdrawal the ammunition was vulnerable to capture due to the time required for the men at the guns to reach and mount the Wurst, usually at least 50 yards; two Wursts were required to provide ammunition for each piece, resulting in the highly undesirable encumbrance of an additional carriage to be maneuvered in the handling of each gun section. Not until 1812 was this carriage introduced to the American service, and then but few in number and for only a short period, by Colonel Izard of the Second Artillery, for service on the Canadian frontier.

Prior to 1808 the artillery teams were rarely driven by enlisted men. The wagoner, the teamster, the carter, and the driver—all were civilians following their normal trade, or farmers offering themselves and their draft animals for hire during the off seasons to eke out meager incomes. As with the Crown troops, since before the days of the Braddock campaign, the normal practice in the Army was to hire these men, with or without their animals, vehicles, and harness. Hire was on a contractual basis for short periods to cover a single movement or operation, or for a campaign, or even by the year. Both oxen and horses were used for artillery draft. Terms of hire varied according to the work to be performed and equipment provided.

The Revolutionary Army acquired, by purchase and construction, a goodly number of wagons and special artillery vehicles in addition to field carriages, tumbrils, and powder carts. These special vehicles included sling carts, travelling siege gun carriages, and mortar beds, along with the common stone boats, sledges, and bateau rigs. As stated, all of these were handled by civilians, usually under the supervision of another professional, the wagon master. This was not normally the case with field gun carriages, tumbrils, and power carts; these,



Harnessing the Wheelers; U.S. Light Artillery. Summer 1808



though driven by civilians, were supervised by officers of the artillery.

Before the close of the Revolution the Army had also purchased a considerable number of artillery horses, and during the latter years of the war, the Army's great need for more horses was partially alleviated by resort to impressment. As with the requisition of forage, the impressment of draft animals—singly, in pairs, and even in teams—was usually accomplished through the civil magistrates, when possible by levies on known Tories. Although contract and impressment often provided suitable harness for the intended work, this was only a partial solution to the harness needs of the Army, and in particular, the artillery. Harness and harness parts of various types had to be purchased from civilian sources. The harness trade was a growing industry, represented in all of the larger communities and many of the smaller by colonial craftsmen: the collar maker, the saddler, and the complete harness maker. With his apprentice's help he could make all the leather parts—shaving, cutting, creasing and punching, then lacing or sewing and padding where needed. He was usually dependent on the local tanner for his leather and the local blacksmith for his hardware, including the chain parts of the heavier gears.

As with horses, civilian sources were not entirely adequate to the harness needs of the artillery. Repair and replacement were usually accomplished by qualified military artificers, the colonial craftsmen turned soldier. Lists of ordnance stores considered essential to artillery trains of that era included tools for collar makers and saddlers, and all the essential parts of draft harness. Stevens lists the following:

bridles
breechings
bit halters
couple of chain traces
draft chains
hides, tanned
horse collars
horse hames
irons for marking horses

pickets for the park, shod
picket line rope, 2½ inch
quoils
saddles
"S" links for draft chains
traces (rope)
tubes (trace)
twintrees, pairs (singletrees)
whip cords
whips

The chief historical value of such a list, as with that contained in John Müller's *Treatise of Artillery*, is that it gives some indication of maintenance methods then in practice. It should be borne in mind that the spare parts of harness, as with many other listed items of the ordnance stores, must have been in extremely short supply during the lean years of the Revolution, and Stevens' list, born of experience during those very same years, represents artillery supply under optimum conditions. Of particular value here is the fact that the various parts listed give further evidence of the types of harness then in use.

American artillery of the Revolution had need for several distinct types, each of which had its homely origin in civilian enterprises of the mother countries. With the exception of the familer New England ox yoke, the simplest type of harness was that used for plowing, for sledging, for stoneboating, and the like. A simple headstall with long reins on a lead rope, a wide leather breast collar, or a pair of wooden hames strapped over a padded neck collar, and a pair of traces were sufficient for the slow, steady work involved. The traces were made of rope for the most part, but for heavy work, of chain, sometimes with a protective cover of leather where the chains rubbed on the horse's barrel. A short, wide back band to support the traces from a point be-



hind the withers was a convenient, but not an essential aid in avoiding a leg over the trace.

For pulling carts and the prevalent two-wheel drays, the simple back band became a small padded saddle of wood or leather, held in place by a girth or bellyband, and over which passed the chain or strap yoke fastened to the thills. This set of gear was a minimum requirement for the single-axle vehicles. To it was often added a breeching, supported by hip straps which in turn, were kept in place by a back strap and crupper. The cart harness just described formed the basis for that used in the single-horse and tandem hitches on the tumbril and the shafted gun limber. If the drivers rode instead of driving or leading on foot, short reins replaced the long reins or lead rope, and a riding saddle replaced the padded back yoke assembly. A back band to support the thills and a breeching assembly were necessary for the shaft horse but could be omitted for the leaders. In the simplest two-horse tandem hitch the loops at the ends of the leader's traces were fastened to the toggles at the heads of the shafter's traces. With neck collars, which were widely used in this country, this type of tandem hitch gave a broken line of draft, partially corrected when the lead trace ends were fastened directly to the thill hooks. In both methods undesirable weight was brought to bear on the shaft horse; in the first arrangement, on the neck, in the second, on the back.

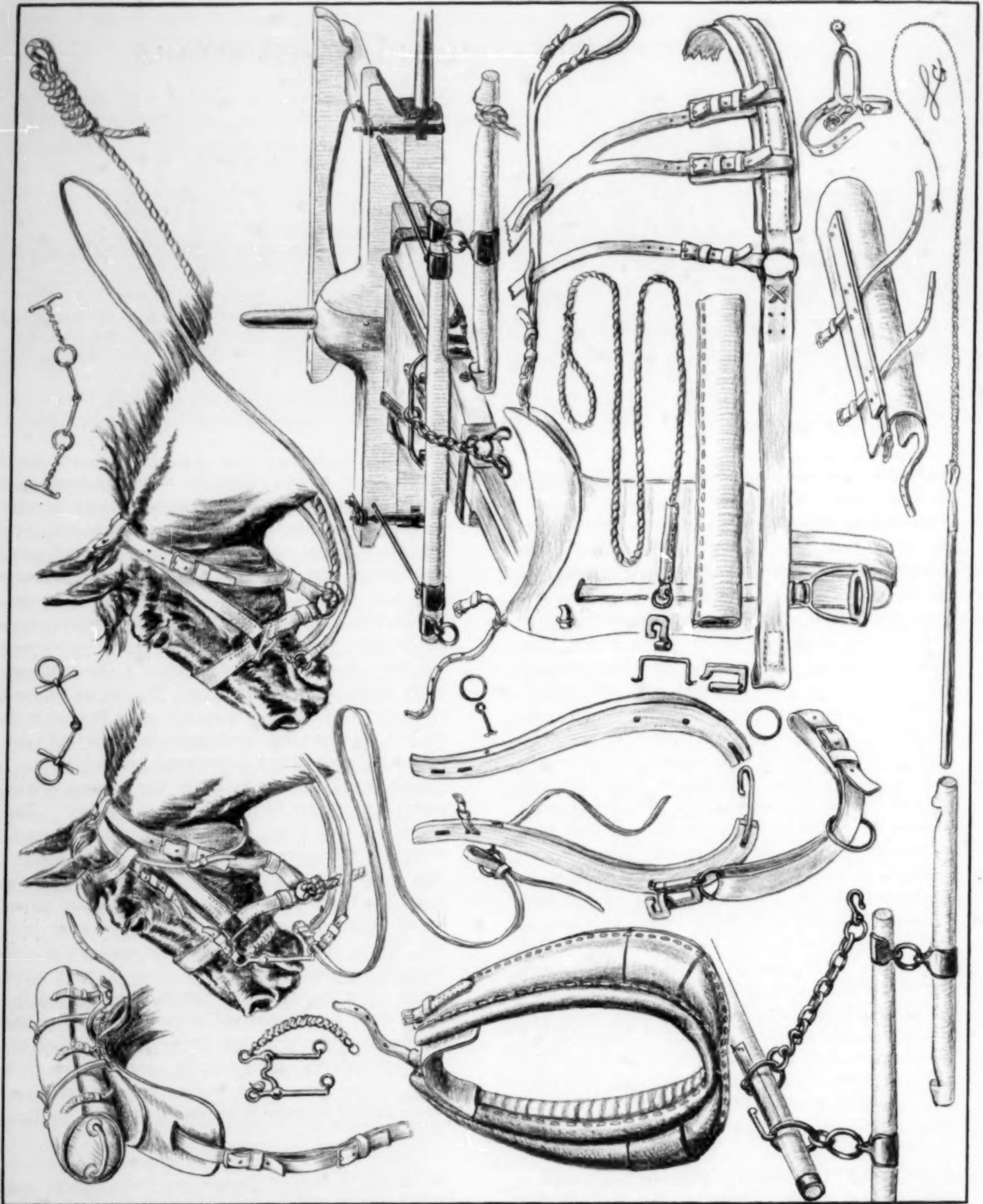
Another type of harness, the one with which this article is most concerned, was the early American wagon team harness. The term is a deliberate one, chosen to differentiate from the types discussed above and to exclude the following: the single-horse wagon harness,

similar to cart harness except that no weight factor was involved on the back; all categories of coaching harness, unsuited to limbered vehicles and rough terrain, and relatively light and expensive with many imported parts and fittings; and finally the distinctive and massive Conestoga harness. This last was harness of a very special sort, suited only to the great Conestoga horses and wagons; markedly German in design, this harness was later to afford the pattern for the Quartermaster heavy wagon harness of the Civil War period. None of these excluded types is acceptable as the progenitor of the first American light artillery harness. Early American wagon team harness is eminently acceptable.

It is proper here to anticipate the question, "Why not French artillery harness as well as materiel?" The answer, in part, is assuredly "Yes," but more by coincidence in development to meet identical requirements than by deliberate adoption of the French harness *en tout*. The DeScheel plates, and the later Tousard plates, include highly dramatic battle scenes of galloping guns and Wursts, both evidently from the same source and strangely reminiscent of some of Carle Vernet's battle scenes. The harness is but sketchily shown, and the plates could not have served as patterns. In fact, the harness used by the French artillery of 1796 and for some years thereafter was actually patterned after their own contemporary wagon harness with the few alterations needed to make it suitable for use by the light artillery.

Certain features of the French harness were common to harness in most of Europe and Great Britain, and, from those sources, common in America too. Using

(continued on page 62)



A SCHEMATIC PRESENTATION OF HARNESS DETAILS

On the opposite page is a presentation of the harness details and draft linkage as reconstructed for the wheel pair shown in Plate 58. All leather parts are of fair leather, uncreased, with simple stitching and lacing. All metal fittings and hardware are of hand wrought steel or iron of the most common variety then in use. Top left is the oval valise with carrying handle on the off end only. It was fastened to the small valise saddle by two straps passing through D-rings at front and back of the pad. The loop for the trace tube is shown at the junction of back band and girth.

Immediately below is the burnished steel curb bit and chain. Although the curb shown has a medium port and short branches, the use of this type bit in draft teams was confined, if possible, to the near wheeler. The linked snaffle with side bars (*top left center*) was greatly preferred. This was especially true for the off horses (*left head*) because normal driving was done by means of the coupling rein which was buckled to the off ring of the bit, then passed under the chin and through the near ring, and then loop-tied to the off terret ring of the near horse, in order to "couple" the pair. The coupling rein was of sufficient length to permit freedom of action to the off horse, and to facilitate guidance by the driver who grasped the rein with his whip hand, from twenty to thirty inches from the bit. Use of the coupling rein with a curb bit is shown here only for the sake of clarity. It was a harmful and dangerously twisting lever on the horse's jaw, and was subsequently prohibited by regulations. If a horse, needing a curb, would not work well on the near side, he was driven by means of the reins of the off bridle (*left head*). The bridle consisted of the brow band, without rosettes; the single, wide, crown piece, slit at the ends to form the throat latch and the upper billets for the cheek straps, which, in turn, buckled to the bit rings. It was worn over the bit halter, which was a simple two-square, single-ring halter, with sliding keepers on throat and chin straps, and which could be fastened to the bridle at the crown by a stud and loop. The squares served to hold the toggles of the watering bridle (*right head*), a small ringed bit with short toggle chains, and reins sewn to each ring. The halter shank or "lead tie" shown here is of rope, although it may have been of leather as they were for so many years thereafter.

The casing of the collar (*left center*) was made of shaped leather on the outer surface and of "ticken" on the bearing surface. It was stuffed with hair, felt, or

wool (at a later date of chopped straw); and although the casing was stitched along the top seams and hame channels, it was laced with thongs around the edge to permit removal of the stuffing. This was frequently done to air and dry it and to restore its resiliency by beating.

The hardware on the collar proper consisted of the D-ring at the top to which the collar strap on the saddle was fastened, and the buckle for the billet which closed the collar at the top. The leather safe extending under the closing at the top was the only pad provided.

The bright, red painted oak or hickory hames (*center*) had two strap holes cut through the horns, for adjustment to different size necks, and a recessed channel with a hole cut in the lower ends for the lower hame link, or strap. A terret ring was secured to the shoulder of each hame by a ring bolt put through the outer edge and cleeted on the inside. The main fittings were put on the face at the widest arch of the bow. These generally consisted of a trace hook and a yoke ring, or lower hame ring, secured by a single-cleeted staple iron. This type of fitting was entirely adequate for lead pairs and could be used for wheelers if the breast strap was one continuous piece, or if the forward ends of two breast straps were fitted with hooks, or rings, to fasten on the trace hook. More often additional provision was made to accommodate the breast straps by lengthening the staple, or by adding another ring or hook. The last type is used here. The breast strap hook, hinged on the same staple with the trace hook and yoke ring, has an extended lip which curves outward to act as a bearing surface for the underside of the trace hook. This feature served to prevent the trace hook and trace ring from rubbing the breast strap at that vulnerable point. A wide yoke strap, or a chain with toggles, fastened through the lower hame rings, served as a traveler for the large yoke ring to which the pole chain was hooked (*lower left*).

The traces (*right center*) were of rope with rings spliced in at the heads and loops spliced at the ends. The fore ends were cased in laced leather sleeves. The breast straps had stitched loops at the fore ends and were thong laced to the breeching rings at the hind ends. Additional lacing holes provided means of adjustment. Both traces and breast straps were passed through wide, laced leather trace tubes which were supported by buckled loops on the girth under the outer skirts of the saddle.

The saddle (*center*) was the common American military saddle of that era, and of British origin. As shown here, it has been modified for artillery use by lengthening the outer skirts so that they will come well down over the traces, and increasing the size of the D-rings on pommel and cantle so as to accommodate the collar and back straps. The padding on the under face of the tree, like that in the collar, could be aired and renovated. The padding on the short under skirts was quilted, and was not touched except by the saddlers. The covering for the pads was more often coarse flannel than "ticken." Saddle blankets or pads were not used except to alleviate pressure on sore backs. There were no jockey leathers, and with the exception of gradually strengthening the tree and increasing the height and width of the cantle, this general type of saddle was used by the American artillery until just before the Civil War. General Israel Putnam's saddle has been used as the model. The only variations are as noted above and the fact that the stirrup leathers of the doughty General's saddle were

not let through the outer skirts.

The back strap (*right center*) buckled to the D-ring at the base of the cantle, had a slide, or keeper, for the loin strap stitched to the upper surface. From that point it extended on through a similar slide, stitched to the upper surface of the hip strap crown, and terminated in split ends which buckled to the crupper. The loin strap, passing through the slide on the back strap, was buckled to the breeching rings on each side. The hip straps, again using the simple split-end principle, were buckled to the breeching by means of "safed" breeching stays or up-tugs (*lower right center*). These were the buckle billets which supported the breeching strap, which, in turn, was stitched to, and reenforced, the breeching body.

The leg guard (*lower right*), used to ward off injury from the pole, was made of heavy leather with a strip of hard wood riveted along the outer side. The whip stock was made of wood and the lash, of braided leather with a cord "snapper."

(continued from page 59)

terms then in use, these common features included: rope or chain traces with protective trace tubes of laced leather; breeching rings and loin straps attached thereto (these were later attached to the trace tubes for artillery harness); bit halters; yoke strap or chain, connecting pole chains and pole to the lower hame rings; breast strap, providing linkage between hames and breeching; and shaped and stuffed collar of leather and "ticken."

Nomenclature of harness has changed along with harness. The names for one type may not, even today, be properly used for another. The bases for naming the parts have usually been the purposes served and the location on the horse. Such basic parts as bridles, collars, traces, and breechings, have not changed in function and but little in form; and the names remain unchanged. The application of modern terms to some of the other parts would only serve to confuse. Nowhere is this more evident than with the terms "breast strap" and "yoke strap." In the set of harness considered here a "breast strap" was the strap fastened to the hame at its widest spread and to a breeching ring at the other end. There were two, one on each side, serving to link breeching to collar, to yoke, and to pole. Although, at the start of the 19th century, the French replaced the two straps with a single continuous strap, from one breeching ring, up one side, over the hames and across the breast, and back down the other side to the breeching, the United States did not adopt this arrangement

until about 1841. Another forty odd years passed before the Army replaced this horizontal direct linkage with a lower, indirect, and more efficient linkage which went under the belly. At that time a "side strap" from each breeching ring linked, near the girth, to a single ring at the end of a strap which extended forward between the forelegs to fasten to the base of the collar, or to a spreader bar or "pole yoke." This strap was usually called a "martingale" when attached to the collar, and a "yoke strap" when attached to the cross member at the end of the pole. Disregarding the still later nomenclature of the breast collar harness which we adopted during World War I, the old "breast strap" had been replaced by a new arrangement of which the principal part was called a "yoke strap," whereas the term "breast strap" was applied to the same piece of harness that had formerly been called "yoke strap" (the strap between the lower hame rings which carried the ring to which the pole chain was hooked).

The most distinctive feature of the harness of any part of the world was the hames. By these a pair or team of drafters from a British shire, a French province, or a German dukedom could be as easily recognized as could their native drivers in their traditional costumes. Even today this is largely true. The shapes and sizes of hames varied from narrow, rounded, and curved wooden hoops to the great flat-faced wide lyre shapes. There were hames ending in a single high capped horn; others with two long, wide spreading horns; still others with no

horns, or with a single piece of wood, in fact a yoke, having a flat, high, wide surface above the neck like a small dash board in front of the withers.

Place of origin was further indicated by the decorative features, the color, the painted design, and the carving. The French artillery's lyre-shaped hames were common to some, but by no means all, of their provinces. This pattern was also to be seen in Bavaria and in some parts of the Low Countries. It is not clearly understood whether this type was adopted for artillery use because the width was believed to provide greater bearing surface on the shoulders, or because the width may have minimized restriction of movement on the forequarters by reducing pressure of the breast straps—or whether this was just the old, old pattern of a familiar artifact, and the natural thing to use.

The lack of reliable evidence (written, pictorial, or artifactual) to indicate that these lyre hames were ever widely used in this country is sufficient reason to question them as parts of the first American light artillery harness. Alonzo Chappel shows this type on a gun team in one of his paintings of the War of 1812. It is possible that some of the American artillery hames were made exactly like the French. It is more plausible that, if Chappel's information was factual, these hames came north with the guns and carriages acquired from the French through the Louisiana Purchase. It was not, however, until the fall of 1809 that two of these carriages were sent north to serve as patterns. Birkhimer states that the guns and carriages included "equipments complete." This possibly indicates harness too, but the date of shipment rules that out as the actual pattern for the American light artillery harness of 1808.

The hames found in the all-too-scarce detailed contemporary pictures which include American wagon teams, or pairs, in harness are markedly similar to those shown in British pictures of the same era. The hames are fairly short with very little flare so that they are almost vertical and parallel when strapped tight on the collar. An entire hame is no thicker or wider than necessary to provide sufficient strength and to accommodate the essential hardware. Three pairs of late 18th or early 19th century, hand shaped, hard wood hames have been accepted as suitable prototypes. Although many pairs have been examined over a period of years, only these three are considered to be reliably authenticated. They vary but little, except in the outer curve, and in the length of the horns. Similar hand wrought iron fittings, found in the middens of Fort Ticonderoga and also on midwestern farm hames which cannot be dated much earlier than 1840, give strong artifactual

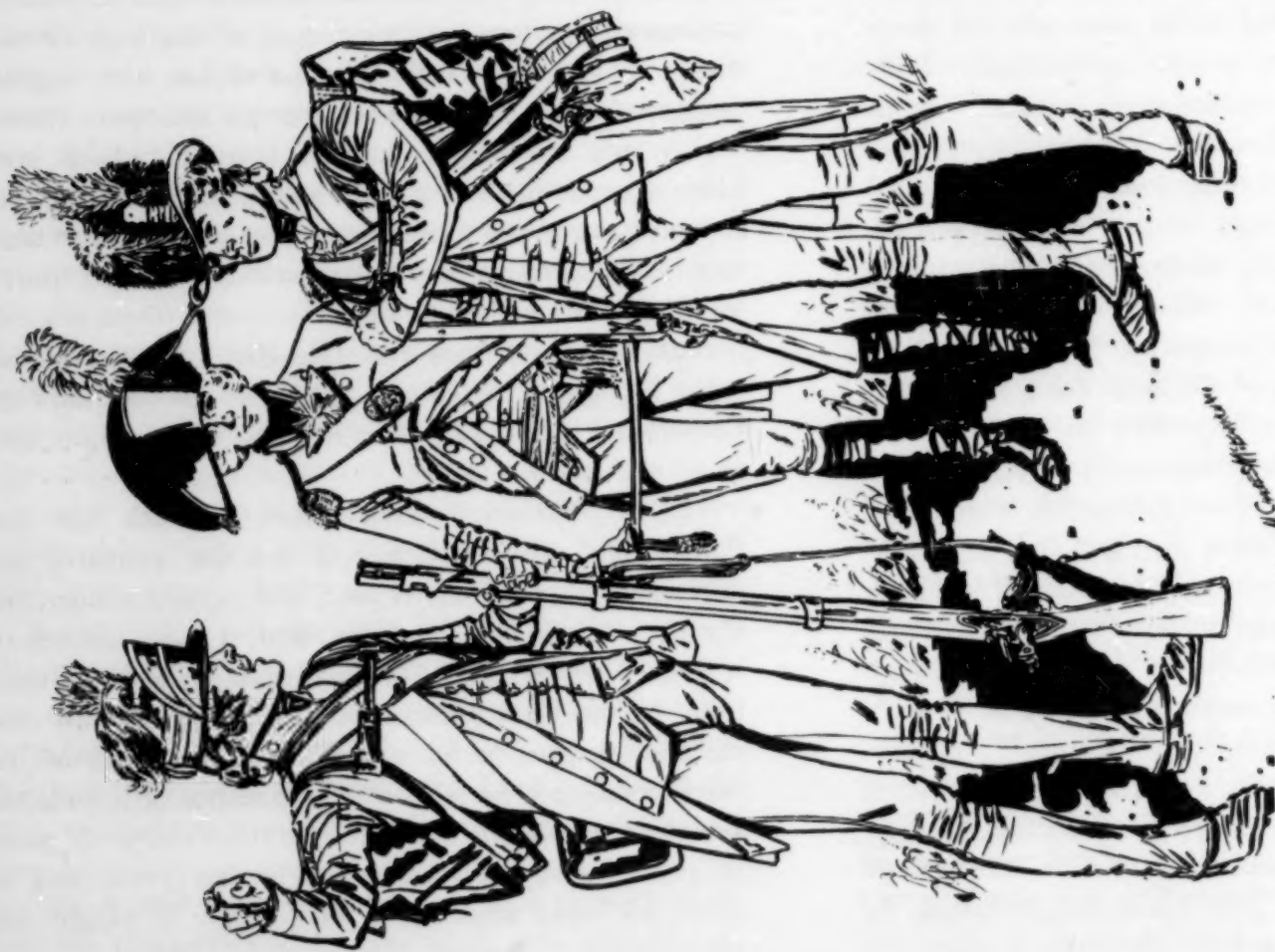


MAJ. GEORGE PETER.

evidence that the basic design of the hardware remained unchanged for three-quarters of a century at least. Subsequent changes are evidently due to the developments in manufacturing processes.

Other properly authenticated artifacts used as models have an equally long, or longer, span of unchanged basic design. Those used include: yoke chains with toggles (rings missing); draft chains; stirrups and spurs (most readily and specifically dated); harness buckles and halter squares; breeching rings and girth buckles; saddle and port manteau (common types of the late 18th century, not necessarily made for exclusive military use); watering, curb, and snaffle bits. The last, a single-jointed, smooth bit, with rings and side bars, is basically the same bit which, in bronze, was used in the days of Caesar, and which may be purchased today in any one of several stainless alloys.

The reconstruction offered here is much like the French light artillery harness of that day, primarily because each is based on its own, and equally similar, indigenous wagon harness for a team of pairs hitched to a single-poled vehicle. The additions to, and modifications of, the basic pattern were necessary in each case in order to provide for driving from the backs of the rear horses; to cope with the peculiarities of a limbered vehicle when drawn over varied terrain and at all gaits; to permit easy replacement of broken parts; and to allow for rapid adjustment for changes in weight and for changes of horses.

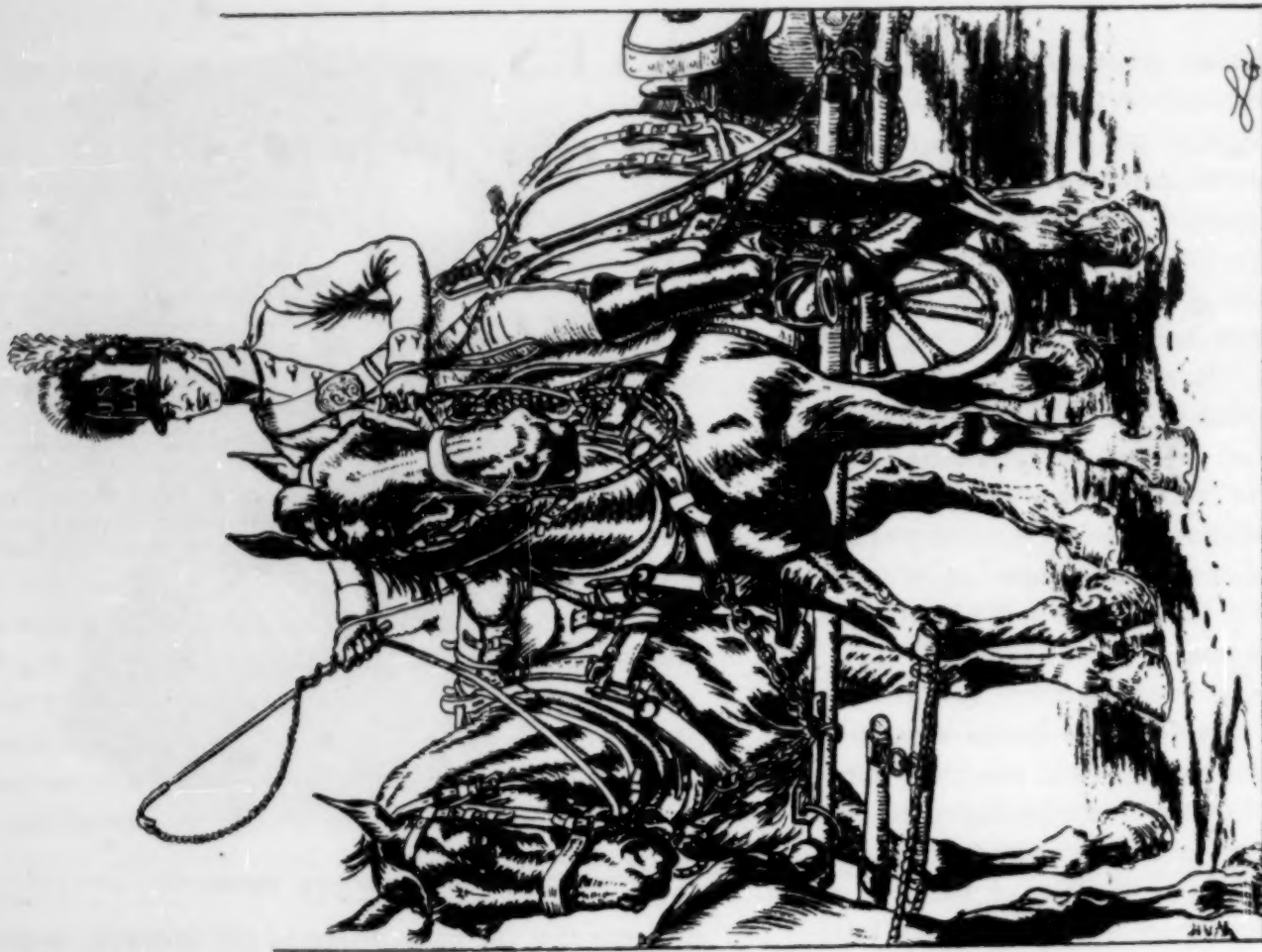


Private, Light Inf. Co., 1st Sublegion

Captain, 2nd Sublegion

Sergeant, Bn. Co., 4th Sublegion

Infantry of the Legion, 1794



Gun Wielder and Driver

Captain Peter's Company, Regiment of Light Artillery, 1808

THE PLATES

INFANTRY OF THE LEGION, 1794

(Plate No. 57)

The authors have withheld publication of this plate for a year or so because of the uncertainty surrounding some details of the uniform of the Legion, not all of which are even now satisfactorily resolved. Yet it seems preferable to record what has been found rather than wait longer for information which may never come.

Major General Anthony Wayne was without question one of the most able, forceful, imaginative, and successful commanders of the Revolution and of the post-Revolutionary period. One can be certain that any military outfit he commanded was different from others of his era; he wasn't called "Mad Anthony" for nothing. The Legion he forged out of the raw and dispirited soldiers he found near Pittsburgh and which he led from 1792 to 1796 was no exception. It constituted an oasis of superior organization, equipment, discipline, and dress amid the mediocre regiments that existed before and afterward.

At this time the Legion comprised four Sub Legions, the 1st and 2nd having come from the former 1st (now 3d) and 2d (now 1st) Infantry Regiments. The 3d and 4th Sub Legions were newly raised and were disbanded in 1802. The first two Sub Legions comprised:

- Field and Staff (lieutenant colonel commanding)
- 2 Infantry Battalions (including light infantry company)
- 1 Rifle Battalion
- 1 Troop of Dragoons
- 1 Company of Artillery

The 3d and 4th Sub Legions were similarly organized except that they did not have rifle battalions. During the summer of 1794 the artillery strength was increased by law, but it is not clear if the number of guns with the Legion was actually raised.

Turning now to dress, it will be recalled that on 11 September 1792 general orders issued by Wayne at Pittsburgh stated:

The Officers being arranged to the four Sub Legions, it now becomes expedient to give those Legions distinctive Marks, which are to be as follows—Viz—

The first Sub Legion white Binding upon their Caps, with white plumes and Black hair—

The Second Sub Legion Red binding to their Caps, red plumes, with White hair.

¹The orders governing the Legion have been published in "General Wayne's Orderly Book, 1792-1797," in *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society Collections*, XXXIV (1904), 341-733. A MS copy including parts of 1792 and 1793 exists in the National Archives (Book 168, Post-Revolutionary Collection, RG 98).

The third Sub Legion—Yellow binding to their Caps—Yellow plumes, and Black Hair

The fourth Sub Legion—Green binding to their Caps, with Green Plumes and white hair—¹

On the following day further orders came out:

... The Officers will wear plain Cock'd Hatts with no other distinctive marks but the plumes of their respective Sub Legions, except in actual service or action, when they will wear the same caps with the Non Commissioned officers and Privates of the respective Sub Legions.

There is more about this distinctive headdress in later orders, including instructions that the tails of cattle slaughtered were to be used "to complete the Caps of the Soldiery." It will be noted that the headdress is consistently called a "cap," and somehow it carried a mane of black or white hair, probably fairly long. It seems clear that what was meant here was a light infantry cap of one of the styles used during the American Revolution. It was, more than likely, cut from a cocked hat and had an upright front piece or flap (or perhaps two such flaps) of felt around the edges of which the variously colored binding was sewn. The Light Company soldier is shown in such a cap.

Sometime between 1792 and 1794 the style of infantry headdress changed to a round hat with a strip of bearskin across the crown. This hat followed civilian models, and the bearskin strip was wired to keep it in position. In the plate the other soldier is shown in this newer headdress. The officer wears his coat buttoned across his chest; it could be arranged at will to conform to the style shown for the men.

Several devices worn by modern U. S. regiments saw their beginnings in the Legion. The 1st Infantry (old 2d) shows the upper right of its shield in red in honor of the plumes and other red devices it once carried. The 3d Infantry's crest to its coat of arms is an officer's cocked hat, and the plume on this hat is white following that ordered for the 1st Sub Legion. The green center stripe in the shoulder loop of the 4th Infantry was taken from the colors of the 4th Sub Legion, although the two units are not historically connected. Both the 1st and 3rd Infantry Regiments carry the battle honor MIAMI on their colors for their part in the campaign which triumphed at Fallen Timbers.

H. Charles McBarron, Jr.

Frederick P. Todd

CAPTAIN PETER'S COMPANY, REGIMENT OF LIGHT ARTILLERY, 1808-1809

(Plate No. 58)

This plate is intended to amplify the information contained in Colonel Todd's "Notes on the Dress of the Regiment of Light Artillery, U.S.A., 1808-1811" (*M.C.&H.*, II, 10), and should be viewed in conjunction with the article on the equipment of the Regiment in this issue. Here attention will be confined to the uniforms, and the personal arms and equipment of the men.

As early as 3 May, Secretary Dearborn had instructed the Purveyor of Public Supplies to secure clothing for the Regiment of Light Artillery, and in this, as with other phases of preparing the new unit for the field, he showed his keen and personal interest. His letter of 3 May specified a coat like that of the old Artillery regiment with skirts nine inches shorter, to be blue, faced red, with yellow metal buttons. Also specified was a cap to replace the Artillery hat—a leather cap having two erect wings and a small front piece or visor, with 1½-inch brass letters "L. A." placed on the front wing, 1½ inches from the top; red feather plume 10 inches high, lower end resting on lower edge of the crown; small round leather cockade indented, attached near the edge of the front wing, 4 inches from the bottom of the crown; and "the leather and workmanship should be good in every part."

On 7 May blue pantaloons for winter and linen coatees were authorized, and yellow buttons and trimmings were again specified. On 14 May fatigue frocks and trousers were authorized. On 21 May the Purveyor wrote that "the artillery buttons for the light Corps cannot be made for some time" and requested permission to substitute "a neat *plain* yellow button." Although a die for the Light Artillery buttons was in the making as early as 11 May, some months elapsed before they were manufactured and issued. The 21st also saw the publication of a printed order of the Secretary of War which included a change in the Light Artillery plumes from red

to "Blue Feathers, tip with Red." On 30 May he ordered these "to be real feathers, well made," and on 8 June instructions to contractors specified "Roman letters for the Light Artillery, vizt. U.S./L.A. for 800 caps . . . of good brass . . . Dispatch is necessary."

By 21 June some plumes had been received—probably a sufficient number for the experimental unit. Twenty-six coats of the shortened pattern had been ordered delivered to Captain Peter. Although it is possible that the initial issue of caps was made from the stock of the older crested type (turned into storage when the Artillery went back to cocked hats in 1800), the correspondence compiled by Colonel Todd gives good indication that sufficient of the new winged type were received in time to be issued prior to the unit's departure for Washington. By 11 October alterations had been proposed; to increase the size of the visor, "similar to those of the other caps," and to add a crest: "a narrow strip of bearskin to appear as a fringe on the upper Edge of the Front." It is this final form that has been used in the plate with the blue woolen pantaloons which would have been normal wear for late fall and winter.

If the commander's energetic supervision included attention to suitable footgear and arms for his men (and it must have), he would have pushed through a requisition for jack boots and horsemen's sabers with slings (from dragoon stores). He would also have seen to it that each of the officers, including himself, had a brace of pistols and suitable, capped saddle holsters. The exact date of the belt plate used in the plate is not known; the eagle and cannon motif had been familiar to the Artillery as early as 1802, and was to appear again on buttons as late as 1815-1820. The sabers used in the plate and other figures are of the 1798 Nathan Starr model.

Harry Larter.



OFFICERS OF THE ROYAL MILITIA, DANISH WEST INDIES, 1816

(Plate No. 59)

Apart from the regular forces there were in the former Danish colonies of the West Indies several military formations, some of which were of a very ancient date.

During the Napoleonic wars these Danish colonies twice were occupied by the British. On both occasions the British forces were so strong that there was nothing for the small regular forces to do but to accept an honorable capitulation. After the last occupation from 1807 to 1814, the militia was raised again, and a new militia law drawn up in 1816 was approved by the King in 1817. Unfortunately no copy of this law has yet been found in the Royal Record Office in Copenhagen. But from other records one may conclude that each of the three units shown must have had the strength of a company, or more. Every white inhabitant not in royal service had to serve in the militia, and for free Negroes a special unit was under preparation.

The commanders of the different units, mostly captains, were commissioned by the King and as such held regular army rank, which gave them the right to wear the gold and crimson sword knot of the regular army officers. The other officers had right only to the so-called *borgerlige* (citizen) sword knot of gold and green. As a special sign of royal grace for extraordinary service, officers of a lower rank in the militia could be given the right to wear the gold and crimson sword knot, indicating regular rank.

The entire militia force of a city or an island was under command of a *Stadshauptmand* (town captain), or a vice-governor, who ranked as a field officer. Both the militia and regular forces were under the command of the Governor General, ranking as a general.

On 30 July 1816 the uniforms shown in the plate were approved by the King. Drawings of the proposed uniforms were sent from the West Indies to Denmark, where they were approved with slight alterations. Although some Danish fashion can be seen, the British influence in the style is obvious. Unfortunately, only drawings of the officers' uniforms were sent for approval, so that one can only guess how the rank and file looked. The cut and color of their dress were probably similar to the officers', but with shorter coat tails, no epaulets, and worsted instead of gold and silver cords. The militiamen were armed with muskets and furnished with great cartridge boxes and possibly short swords.

Order of



Dannebrog

On 11 November 1818 it was decided that two other companies (the Ostende Company and the Company's Company) together with the Christiansted Citizen-Company should form a Christiansted Division, with the uniform of the last.

In 1829 the entire militia was reorganized and the uniforms changed to dark green. It seems, however, that the St. Jan Citizen-Militia and the St. Thomas Citizen-Militia for some time after 1829 kept their old uniforms. The pale yellow facings of the Christiansted Citizen-Company appear to have been changed to white about 1820.

Curious it is that the King approved epaulets for the officers of the militia. Home in Denmark the officers in the regular army and the militia wore marks of rank on their sleeve and no epaulets in order to keep down expenses and use domestic materials. Yet in 1819 we find the approval of a new uniform with epaulets to another West Indian militia unit, with the remark that the epaulets must not be worn in Denmark.

The militia forces of the Danish colonies of the West Indies were indeed very well dressed and armed, and their service was performed with great enthusiasm. Commissions were eagerly sought after by the sons of the wealthy planters, because of the smart uniforms and the position in society which fell to wearers of the royal sword knot.

Preben Kannik



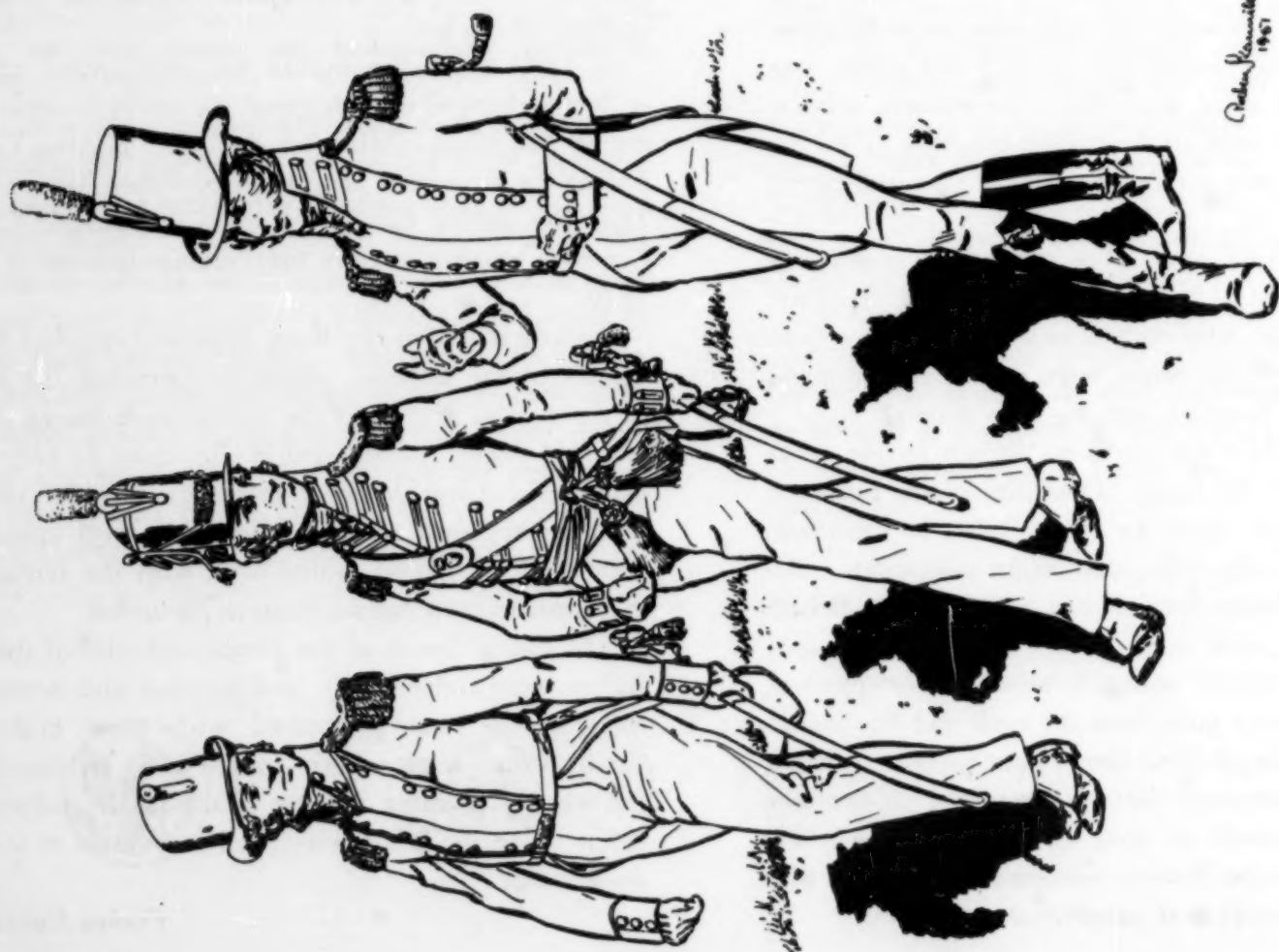
Company Officer

Trooper

Musician

Company Guide

2nd U. S. Cavalry Regiment, 1861-65



St. Yon Citizen-Militia

Christiansted Citizen-Company

St. Thomas Citizen-Militia

Officers of the Royal Militia, Danish West Indies, 1816

2D U.S. CAVALRY REGIMENT, 1861-1865

(Plate No. 60)

Among the best short accounts of the Federal cavalry in the Civil War is that by Captain Charles Dudley Rhodes in *The Photographic History of the Civil War* (IV, 46-70). He has this to say about its organization and development:

At the outbreak of the great Civil War in America, the regular cavalry at the disposal of the Federal Government consisted of the First and Second Regiments of Dragoons, one regiment of Mounted Rifles, and the First and Second Regiments of Cavalry. Early in the year 1861, the Third Cavalry was added to the others, and soon after, all six regiments were designated as cavalry and numbered serially from one to six.

The old regiments had been composed of ten troops, subdivided into five squadrons of two troops each, but the organization of the Sixth Cavalry Regiment called for twelve troops. In July, 1861, this organization was extended to all regular regiments, and in September of the same year the volunteer regiments, which had started out with ten troops each, were organized in a like manner. As the war progressed, the squadron organization was abandoned. When a regiment was subdivided for detached service, it was usually into battalions of four troops each.

The early war organization of cavalry troops called for one hundred enlisted men to a troop, officered by a captain, a first lieutenant, and a supernumerary second lieutenant. But in 1863, troops were given an elastic strength, varying between eighty-two and one hundred enlisted men, and the supernumerary lieutenant was dropped. Each regiment, commanded by a colonel, had a lieutenant-colonel and three majors, with a regimental commissioned and non-commissioned staff, which included two regimental surgeons, an adjutant, quartermaster, commissary, and their subordinates. . . .

Strange as it may now seem, the Federal authorities intended, in the beginning, to limit the cavalry force of the Union army to the six regular regiments; and even such a veteran soldier as General Scott gave it as his opinion that, owing to the broken and wooded character of the field of operations between the North and South, and the improvements in rifled cannon, the duties of cavalry would be unimportant and secondary.

Only seven troops of regular cavalry were available for the first battle of Bull Run, in 1861, but the firm front which they displayed in covering the confused and precipitate retreat of the Federal army, probably saved a large part of the main body from capture; but they never received the recognition that was deserved. However, the importance of cavalry was not altogether unappreciated, for we find, at Gettysburg, the Union cavalry of the Army of the Potomac aggregating nearly thirteen thousand officers and men. The close of the war saw Sheridan at Appomattox with fifteen thousand cavalymen, while Wilson, in the South, was sweeping Mississippi and Alabama with an army of horsemen. But the evolution of this vast host from insignificant beginnings was a slow process, fraught with tremendous labor.

The carbine illustrated is the Spencer, which generally replaced the Sharps by the middle of the War. The 7-shot magazine used in the Spencer was a removable tube, and late in the War the Blakeslee carrier was produced to hold a supply of spare magazines.

The 2d Cavalry, one of the most celebrated of Army outfits, has through numerous changes somehow managed to hold onto the number "2." It was organized as the 2d Dragoons and became successively the 2d Cavalry (1861), 2d Cavalry Group and 2d Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (1943), 2d Constabulary Regiment (1946), and 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment (1948), which it remains today. When in 1942 all its personnel and equipment were used to form an armored regiment, this was called the 2d Armored Regiment; and when this outfit was reorganized in 1943 it became the 2d Tank Battalion. The present regiment carries the battle honors of all these various World War II ancestors.

This tenacity of tradition appears to be no new thing with the Regiment. General Rodenbough tells in his history of the Second of the "deep regret" with which the men learned of the consolidation of the old Dragoons, Mounted Riflemen and Cavalry into the single branch of Cavalry, which took place in 1861.¹ By this change all of the six regiments were ordered to wear yellow facings, the Dragoons giving up orange and the Riflemen, green:

By this the "Second Dragoons" became the Second Regiment of Cavalry, under which name it will hereafter be referred to in this book. Alas! for the cherished "orange," it must give place to the gaudy yellow; "but the troops," so read the order, "will be permitted to wear out the clothing now on hand." The marvelous durability of orange facings, or the prodigious quantity of similar clothing "on hand" in the "Second," enabled that regiment to postpone for more than two years the thorough execution of the order; and, when eventually forced to "change their stripes," the depressing effect might have readily caused an ignorant civilian to look upon yellow cloth as military mourning.

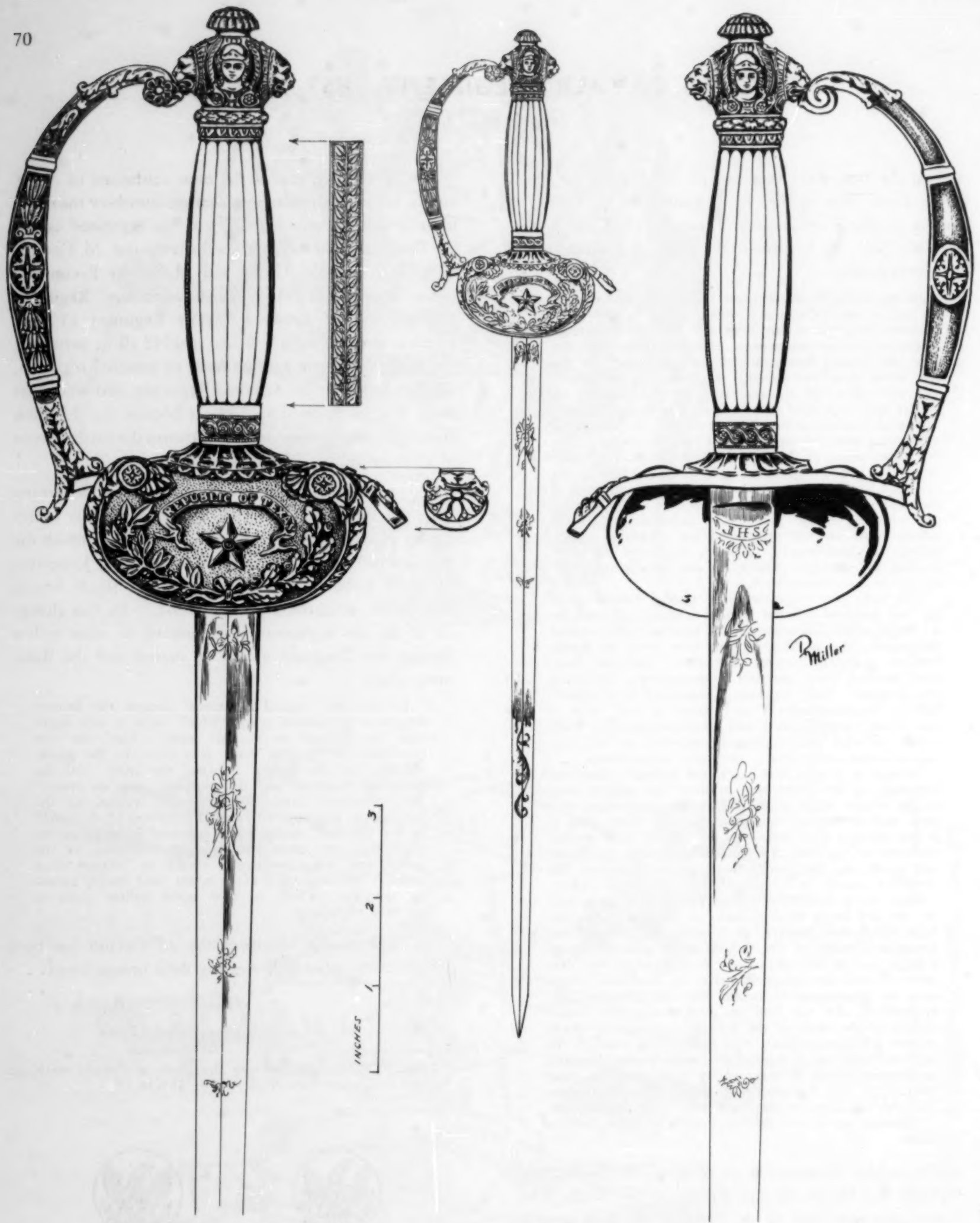
In view of this comment the 2d Cavalry has been shown in the plate still wearing their orange braid.

H. Charles McBarron, Jr.

Frederick P. Todd

¹ Theo. F. Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second Dragoons*, New York, 1875, 237-38.





Republic of Texas Sword

COLLECTOR'S FIELD BOOK

REPUBLIC OF TEXAS SWORD

The accompanying drawing by Robert L. Miller illustrates an exceptionally rare American small sword from the collection of Delbert J. Harrill of Falls Church, Va. It was collected some years ago in Baltimore, and its history before that date is not known. Texas swords of any type are necessarily scarce because of the small size of the Texas armed forces and the shortness of their history, but this specimen has the distinction of being the only Texas small sword known. Almost all other Texas swords that survive are sabers of the 1833 dragoon pattern made by the Ames Manufacturing Co., of Chicopee, Massachusetts.

The sword itself is a typical example of the small sword of the period (1836-1845). In fact, other swords which are similar in all respects to this piece except for the design on the counterguard, and which were used by officers and diplomats of the United States, are to be found in various public and private collections. The blade, which has been drastically shortened at some period in its history, is triangular in cross-section. All three facets of the blade are concave, and the upper section (probably about one-third of the original length) is blued and ornamented with gilt etching of floral sprays and military trophies. The metal portions of the hilt are made of cast brass and gilded. The obverse and reverse plaques of the grip are mother of pearl.

There is considerable speculation concerning the original use of this interesting specimen. Diplomats wore such swords on formal occasions, and this sword may have belonged to a Texas ambassador or minister. In the United States forces medical officers of both the Army and Navy wore small swords, as did engineers and officers of the Pay Department. The same situation was probably true in the Texas forces. Finally, high ranking officers of both the Army and Navy frequently wore what pleased them and ignored the official prescriptions.

These would seem to be the general categories into which this sword would fit. A portion of the Texas Navy spent considerable time in Baltimore, and of course Texas diplomatic personnel visited there frequently. These facts might tend to focus attention on these possibilities to the exclusion of the others, but it should be remembered that the century that elapsed between the manufacture of the sword and its discovery by students could have offered ample opportunity for a sword from any of the branches of the Texas uniformed services to travel far from its original home.

Harold L. Peterson

AN EARLY MARINE CORPS CAP PLATE

The illustrated cap plate is in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Mosler, of Philadelphia, Pa. It is a thin brass stamping, $3\frac{1}{8}$ by $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, with a single hole in each corner.

In general characteristics, this plate appears to be contemporary to the pewter plate of the U.S. Regular Infantry, and the brass plate of the U.S. Regular Riflemen, both of the period 1812-1816. There are several points of similarity: in place of arrows in the eagle's left talon (as viewed in the illustration) all three plates display thunderbolts; the letters in the word "Marines" are like those on the other two plates; finally, all use holes for wire loop fasteners.

Most unusual is the motto FORTITUDINE, appearing on the scroll over the eagle's head. Apparently the Marines had an earlier motto than its famed "Semper Fidelis."

Plate 24 in the First Series of "Military Uniforms in America" (1950) shows the uniform and leather cap worn by the Marine Corps in the period 1805-1818. The text accompanying the plate points out the lack of an exact description of both the cap and its trimmings. Perhaps this will solve the puzzle, for this insignia would meet the requirements for the period 1805-1818.

J. Duncan Campbell





THE EAGLE BEARER, SIX FEET AND EIGHT AND A HALF INCHES HIGH, OF THE CHIPPEWA EAGLES.
SKETCHED BY A. W. GRIPPEN.

"OLD ABE," WAR EAGLE OF THE 8TH WISCONSIN

In gathering material to be included in a book on American military customs and traditions, we met up with "Old Abe." His story was well known to our grandfathers, but we wonder how many today recall the details of this remarkable mascot.

"Old Abe" was an American bald eagle, captured when very young and brought up as a pet. In September

1861, while the 8th Wisconsin was being formed, a company of volunteers from Eau Claire marched into the camp bearing the eagle above them on a perch. As the men entered the gate, their fifes shrilling "Yankee Doodle," the great bird, until then quiet, seized the corner of a small American flag fixed to his perch and spread his wings with a continuous flapping motion. He so held the flag during the time of crossing the grounds to the headquarters of the regiment. The crowd of other soldiers who had witnessed the entrance was

enthusiastic, and the eagle was adopted as the mascot of the 8th, which was known thereafter as the "Eagle Regiment."

In due course the eagle was sworn in and a sturdier perch constructed. A bearer was appointed, and from then on "Old Abe" served continuously with the unit. When in line, he rode on the left of the color bearer, in the center of the regiment, his perch carried in the same manner as a flag, above the heads of the men. A leather ring was fastened to one of his legs, to which was attached a strong hemp cord, 16 to 20 feet long. Usually, on the march or in an engagement, this cord was shortened to a few feet in order to keep him to the perch. But there were times when he flew free above the regiment, and it was claimed that he could recognize it from the air amid all the others in a line of battle. Certainly he knew and long remembered many of the individual soldiers.

The eagle is credited with 36 engagements and battles, including Corinth and the siege of Vicksburg. Altogether he had six War Bearers between September 1861 and September 1864, three of whom were shot out from under him. At best it was no easy job to carry the heavy perch and bird, and "Old Abe" was very quick to show his resentment of a green Bearer who jostled him too much. When the regiment was mustered out in 1864 he returned to Madison and was given a permanent home there in the state capitol.

The stories told of the eagle were, of course, legion, for he became one of Wisconsin's foremost celebrities. Six books have been written in whole or in great part about him. He appeared to be fearless when inspired, but he had his share of human weaknesses. He took a drink now and then and, if he got the chance, was not above going absent without leave. Once the regiment was in reserve but under heavy artillery fire, and the men were ordered to lay flat on the ground. The Eagle Bearer, however, kept "Old Abe's" perch in the air to encourage the soldiers. As the Bearer hugged the earth beneath the screaming cannister, he felt something nestle beside him. It was "Old Abe," flattened out like the rest, and nothing could induce the eagle to return to his perch until the regiment stood up. Then, as the lines moved forward in attack, he beat his wings and screamed encouragement with particular vigor as if to make up for his recent weakness.

The woodcut reproduced here is from Benjamin LaBree, *The Pictorial Battles of the Civil War* . . . , vol. I, p. 136. It shows "Old Abe" in the early days of his military career.

M.P.T.



LEATHER CAP, WAR OF 1812

Here is a photograph of a leather cap, probably dating from the second half of the War of 1812. It came from the collection recently bought by Mrs. Brown, some pieces of which are in my possession. The tag attached when I received it reads, for what it is worth: "War of 1812, all leather shako. Reason for identity: very rare—saw same in Atwater Kent Museum in Phila. Pa. From Reginald Hart Collection."

The cap is much shrunken, particularly the visor, which has drawn in the lower edge of the crown by about one-half inch. It is possibly a militia type but I believe it may be the "yeoman crowned" cap issued the Regular Army Light Artillery.

The sweat band is only in front but its ends are so rough that it may have been all around. The flap button is plain white metal; the right hand one is missing. The seam of the crown is on the left side, covered by a plume socket which comes to about an inch below the top edge of crown. There are no holes or perforations of any kind, nor any indication of any ornaments, such as plate and cords, ever having been worn. A plate may have been secured by a string or strap around the crown and the cockade tied around the stem of the pompon or plume. The cap was originally black, the visor, sweat band and flap still are, but the crown is now faded to brown. Dimensions:

Diameter of the top at present:	7 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	a good $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick
Height in back:	6 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	
Height in front:	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	scooped out to take visor
Width of visor in front:	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	
Folded flap on back:	4 $\frac{1}{8}$ "	but much shrunken

H. Charles McBarron, Jr.

QUESTION: VOLUNTEER COMPANIES

I would be happy to have any information available on two early Volunteer Militia outfits: the Maryland Guard and the American Grays. The former, I understand, existed in Baltimore, Md., between 1859 and 1861 as part of the 53d Regiment; veterans of the Guard were largely instrumental in reforming the old 5th Maryland Regiment following the Civil War. About the American Grays I have next to no information save that they existed as a regiment about 1814.

*Alban P. Shaw III
Richmond, Va.*

OFFICER'S ZOUAVE DRESS, 1862-1865

Among the many interesting items of military clothing presented by Anne Brown to the Company last year is the almost complete uniform of an officer of the 165th New York of the Civil War period, illustrated here. Its rarity lies in the presence of a zouave jacket and vest instead of the regulation dark blue frock coat. Union Army zouave officers wore the braided jacket, it would seem, only while off duty, and probably its purchase was optional. The cap, vest and scarlet trousers, of course, could be worn with either jacket or frock coat.

The jacket is of the same general color and cut as worn by the enlisted men of the regiment, with gold braid and small sleeve buttons added. The "Z" superimposed over a "2" is a distinctive device of the outfit. In the *Album of the Second Battalion Duryee Zouaves* (New York, 1906) there is a photograph of Lieutenant Linquist, Company C, wearing an almost identical uniform. The jacket, trousers and other items illustrated are supposed to have belonged to a "Private Shepherd." However, no one with this name was commissioned in the Regiment and so the identity of the original owner cannot be placed.

The 165th New York was organized in New York City in November 1862 around a group of veterans of the 5th New York Volunteers, the celebrated Duryee Zouaves, and was authorized to take the name of the parent regiment. Like the Fifth, its ranks held sons of some of the City's wealthier and more socially prominent families. Also like the Fifth, it claimed a close if unofficial connection with the 7th Regiment, New York National Guard. It served ably in the siege of Port Hudson, Louisiana, but missed equalling the extraordinary record of its parent by a wide margin.

Frederick P. Todd

THIS I REMEMBER: AN APPEAL FROM THE EDITOR

All of us know the thrill of finding an eyewitness drawing of some elusive object we have been searching for. All of us have blessed the fellow who, years ago, wrote down what he remembered about an event which otherwise would have been lost to memory. Usually there was little to prompt these contemporary artists or authors to record such things, so commonplace or unimportant they seemed at the time; only a vague persuasion that someday the note or picture might answer a question for a person of kindred interests.

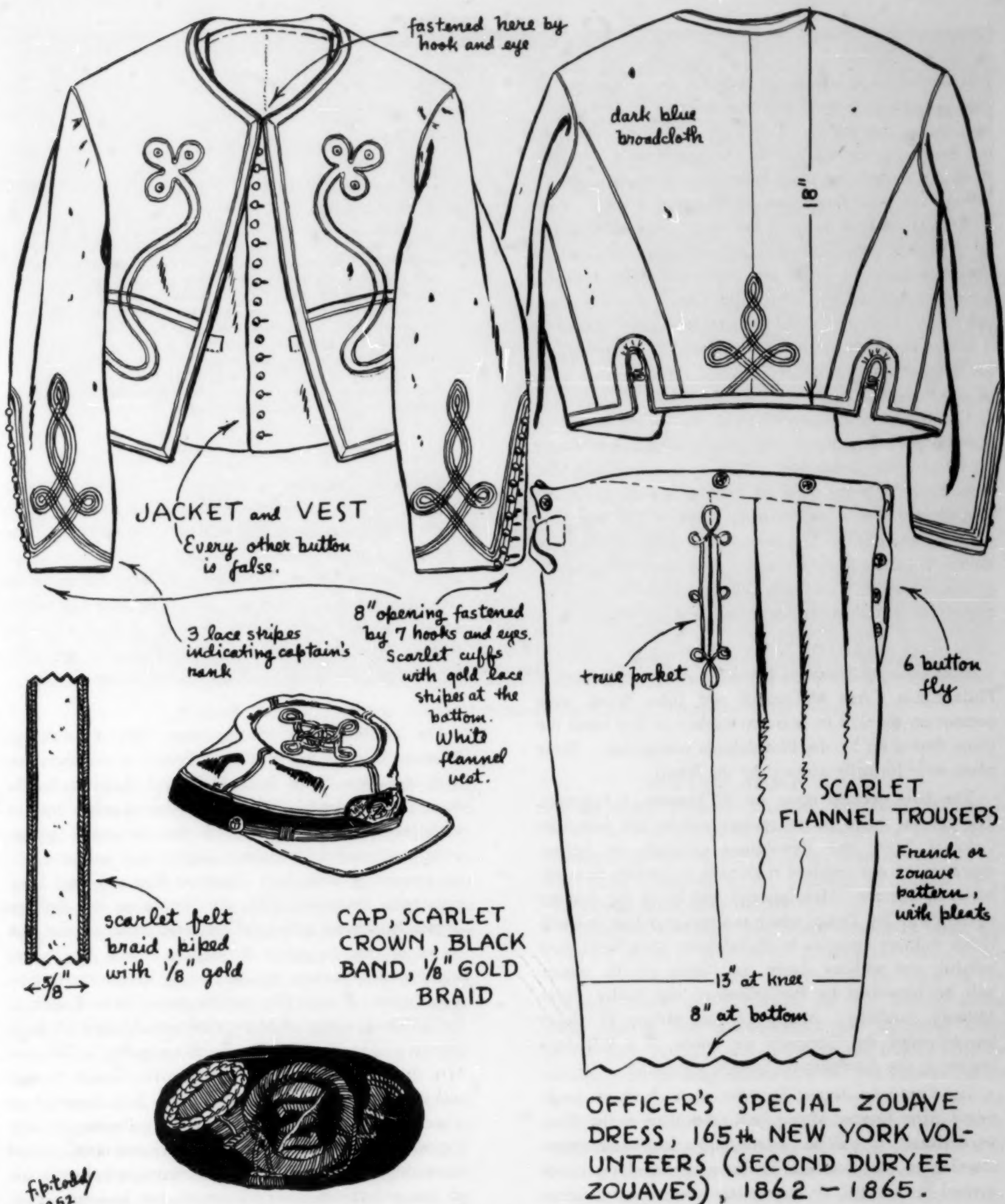
We have a word "serendipity" to describe unanticipated good luck in research. The chance discovery of an unknown manuscript, the question put to the one stranger who has the answer, the glimpse of the half-buried object which shows the archaeologist where to dig—these are evidences of serendipity. Every scholar can count on a small measure of pure luck in research as a reward for much bootless plugging. Unfortunately, in our field, we are forced to count too heavily on it.

I appeal to all members of the Company to come

to the assistance of the Goddess of Chance by recording *now* what they remember. The data may seem (like yesterday's newspaper) dull as can be, but fifty years or so hence they will be read (like yesterday's newspaper) with novelty and delight. Contemporary evidence, remember, has a quality all its own which cannot be matched by later history.

There need be no problem of what to record; simply think over the things you would like to know about the soldier of a century ago and put down the comparable information which has come to your personal knowledge in recent years. If you can back your memory with evidence from other sources, written or pictorial, so much the better. The more unusual the material the more it will interest others, of course, but the essential point is to get it on record in some reasonably correct and orderly fashion.

Watch the magazine for examples of "This I Remember" and see what you can add to the collection.



GAZETTE

Just as this issue was going to press the Governors of the Company held their mid-year meeting at Alexandria, Va., on 22 September. We have space here for only the meeting's highlights. To the regret of all, Harold Peterson, forced by strict doctor's orders, resigned as Editor, but was reappointed Consulting Editor. Fred Todd was made Editor-in-Chief with responsibility for all Company publications; concurrently he withdrew as President. In his place the Governors elected Harry Larter. In this game of musical chairs the Company definitely came out ahead. Peterson's loss, serious as it is, will be in part offset by his continuing help, whereas the acquisition of Colonel Larter as President is a gain of great moment.

The Treasurer's report showed the society to be in sound financial condition, but (like everyone else) smack up against the problem of rising costs, particularly for printing. As a result, dues next year will be \$5.50 instead of \$5.00. The Secretary reported 252 members on the rolls, plus 33 institutional subscribers. Curator Harry Wandrus gave a detailed and interesting report of the Company's uniform collection, which we hope to publish in full in the forthcoming issue.

★ ★ ★

The real news concerns the 1953 Annual Meeting at Philadelphia. Ash McDonnell and John Wirth were present on the 22d in order to explain at first hand the plans drawn up by the Philadelphia committee. These plans were formally adopted by the Board.

The dates decided upon are 30 January - 1 February. The general theme of the session will be the American Colonial Wars and Revolution although, as before, members are not required rigorously to confine their exhibits to this era. Headquarters will be at the Armory of the First City Troop, which is a rare privilege in itself. Other military agencies in Philadelphia have been most helpful, and without doubt the climax of the session will be furnished by the cadets of the Valley Forge Military Academy. Major General Milton G. Baker has extended the Company the honor of a full dress review at the Academy on Sunday afternoon.

The Company dinner Saturday night, with its traditional After-Dinner Movie, will take place at the Warwick Hotel. It will be preceded by a formal afternoon meeting at the Franklin Institute, at which we have invited Mr. Cecil C. P. Lawson, the distinguished author of *A History of the Uniforms of the British Army*, to be the speaker. At this writing it appears quite

certain that Mr. Lawson will be able to make the journey from England for this purpose. His talk will be illustrated.

★ ★ ★

The following letter, dated 17 June 1952, was received from Headquarters, Second Army:

Thanks to you and your organization, and Colonel Tood, the 16 hand-colored plates were viewed and appreciated by the group for whom they were displayed. For your information the prints were used in connection with the 177th Birthday of the U.S. Army as celebrated by this headquarters. The prints arrived in ample time, which was also most appreciated.

These are excellent prints and proved to be most appropriate for the occasion. I also obtained reproductions of the Ogden prints for the occasion and, in my opinion, the prints from your Company of Military Collectors were far superior in every way.

★ ★ ★

Notice of the First International Congress of the History of Costume, to be held in Venice between 31 August and 8 September of this year, was received some while ago by our President. Notably, no one from the United States was on the Organization Committee nor, so far as we know, was an American or Canadian invited to attend. Great Britain was represented by Mr. James Laver, author of the delightful *British Military Uniforms* (King Penguin No. 42). No further report of the business has come in.

★ ★ ★

On 14-16 August of this year, Fort Ticonderoga Museum held its first historical Forum in collaboration with the New York State Historical Association, the Society for Colonial History and several other learned societies. Naturally, many of the discussion groups were concerned with military history and several Company members took part. Harrison Bird and Fred Todd each gave illustrated talks, the former on the firearms in the Museum's collection and the latter on the uniforms of the American Revolution. Ash McDonnell and Harold Peterson participated in discussion groups. Two papers of particular interest were: Hon. Robert T. Pell's "The Strategy of Montcalm" and Admiral H. Kent Hewitt's "The Valcour Fleet." A reception by Mr. and Mrs. John H. G. Pell in the beautiful King's Garden and the Pavilion climaxed the Forum. Fort Ticonderoga deserves commendation for introducing the forum technique with its premise of serious study and open, critical discussion, not only of historical events and objects, but of the techniques and policies of the Museum itself. The Company salutes Director John Pell and Curator Eleanor Murray.



"Merry Christmas, 1776," by H. Charles McBarron, Jr., Courtesy Department of the Army

In a tradition-breaking move the Department of the Army recently issued eight full-colored plates, 14x20 inches in size, showing combat episodes in Army history. Distribution carried these down to company level. So popular have these pictures become, both inside and outside the Army, that the Department plans to place some on public sale at the Government Printing Office in Washington. The titles are: "Merry Christmas, 1776," "The Road to Fallen Timbers," "Those Are Regulars, By God!" (Chippewa, 1814), "Remember Your Regiment" (Resaca de la Palma, 1846), "First at Vicksburg," "Rock of the Marne," "Bataan," and "Remagen Bridgehead."

Members who attended the 1951 Annual Meeting will recall seeing the original paintings for the first three plates, done by Member Hugh McBarron. One is illustrated on this page. Incidentally, *Esquire* ran seven of the paintings in its July 1952 issue. The Army has commissioned McBarron to do four additional battle scenes about which more will be said later.

INDIAN ARMY MUSEUM

At the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, an Indian Army Museum has finally been established. To all those interested in the old Indian Army, from the days of the East India Company to the partition of August 1947, this is very good news indeed.

There are no longer any British troops in India, but from the day in 1754 when the Thirty-ninth Foot (whose motto is *Primis in Indis*) arrived on the coast of the Carnatic, down to 1947 when the last Tommy sailed away forever, that sub-continent has witnessed some of the most amazing and desperate and bloody military actions in all the long history of war. The famous Indian Army will now have a permanent memorial, and the exploits of soldiers like Stringer Lawrence, Eyre Coote, Wellesley, Havelock, Lawrence, and Colin Campbell will stand a better chance of popular remembrance.

In the Museum an effort will be made to keep collections of trophies and pictures pertaining to old regiments in one room, whose walls will be hung with corps and



"First at Vicksburg," by Hal Stone. Courtesy Department of the Army

regimental badges carved out of oak in the form of plaques, 8x6½ inches in size. The Museum will contain uniforms and head-dress, weapons, medals and decorations, documents and albums, portraits of outstanding officers, both British and Indian, and other paintings and prints.

The Indian Army Museum came into being through the efforts, exerted over a period of five years, of the late Lord Birdwood and of Field-Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck. Though the Army was represented in both the Imperial War Museum and the Royal United Service Institution, the new display at Sandhurst is the only one devoted exclusively thereto. The present day armies of India and Pakistan, whose traditions were so gloriously formed in the "old Army," have been among the most enthusiastic supporters of the project.

CORRECTION

Member Robert Rucker calls attention to an error in Plate 11 of "Military Uniforms in America" (the title, you know, of the series of colored plates to which many

of you have been subscribing for years past). Rucker checked picture with text and found the tassels on the fezzes should be blue and not red, as is incorrectly shown.

Had he gone one step further and looked up the source he would probably have noted how the mistake occurred. The data on dress was taken from *Under the Maltese Cross: Antietam to Appomattox* and therein is a colored photograph of a soldier in full zouave dress. Color reproduction was in its infancy in 1910 when this book was published, and somehow the tassel illustrated there looks more red than blue. Data for our colorist was based upon this photograph, and the result was the wrong color on the tassel.

Changing red to blue on the plates is not too easy a task, and three tassels are involved. If a mere notation of the error will not suffice, we suggest gentle erasure of as much of the red as will come off, replacement with waterproof drawing ink of the original printing as necessary, and recoloring with Prussian blue.

Editor

corrected ✓

NOTES ON PUBLICATIONS

We have just seen the advance proofs of Ray Riling's reprint of *Uniforms and Dress of the Army of the Confederate States* and it is with genuine delight and considerable humility that we write of this coming publication. Delight, because Ray has handled the job with rare skill and excellent taste; humility, because the book is dedicated to the Company in words of praise which can only be accepted in that vein.

Anyone who has studied Confederate military uniforms knows the extreme rarity of the official dress regulations published in Richmond, Virginia, by Blanton Duncan in 1861. Its fifteen lithographed plates show the uniforms, insignia and buttons ordered to be worn by officers and men of the Confederacy. Riling has included the General Orders of 24 January 1862 which changed the *kepi* from gray to dark blue, red, light blue, and yellow, depending on the branch of service.

In our opinion, Ray has been wise in issuing the reprint uncolored, so that it can be sold for ten dollars, instead of attempting a far more expensive hand-colored reproduction. He has also reduced the size from about 10 x 14 inches to 8½ x 11, so that the book will fit on standard shelves. The paper is of good quality and readily takes water color. We congratulate Ray on the job, and we recommend the work to members. It will be a limited edition; requests should be mailed directly to Raymond L. J. Riling, 6844 Gorsten Street, Philadelphia 19, Pennsylvania.

★ ★ ★

Interest in Custer and the Little Big Horn never flags, it seems. Within recent months the National Park Service has completed two striking dioramas for its museum on the battlefield and we hope to persuade the Service to let us publish photographs of these in some future issue. And this year saw the appearance of a short illustrated monograph entitled *The Colors of the Seventh at the Little Big Horn*, by Colonel W. A. Graham.

Colonel Graham has in the past written extensively about this battle and his wide background of knowledge gives this booklet significance. The 7th Cavalry regimental color, Custer's personal headquarters flag, and the company guidons are all described and illustrated. The study appeared originally in the 1950 Los Angeles Westerners' "Brand Book" and is reprinted therefrom in a limited edition of 300 copies. Colonel Graham's address: 555 Radcliffe Ave., Pacific Palisades, Calif.

Member Herbert Knoetel, earlier this year, prepared a set of eleven delightful water color drawings showing participants in the Battle of the Little Big Horn. They include General Custer, several of his officers, typical troopers and so on down to an Indian scout. He also shows the same flags as does Colonel Graham—both independently arriving at identical conclusions concerning the sort of colors and guidons carried. Members desiring to purchase a set of Knoetel's originals may write him care of the Editor.

★ ★ ★

The Continental Book Company, 206 Mill Street, Marietta, Georgia, not long ago reprinted one of the classic Confederate unit histories: J. F. J. Caldwell, *The History of a Brigade of South Carolinians Known First as "Gregg's" and subsequently as "McGowan's Brigade."* The first edition was published in Philadelphia in 1866, showing it was written while the events were fresh in the author's memory. Dr. Douglas S. Freeman called it "the best Brigade history of the Army of Northern Virginia and, I think, one of the best of all the early books of the Confederacy." The Brigade consisted of the 1st (Gregg's), 12th, 13th and 14th South Carolina Volunteers and Orr's Regiment of Rifles.

★ ★ ★

Recent months have seen the publication of three exceptionally good books on firearms. The first of these to appear was *Colt Cartridge Pistols* by James E. Serven. Collectors of Colt revolvers have long been familiar with the author's first three monographs which cover the Colt percussion revolvers. This final volume, printed and bound uniformly with its predecessors, brings the story up to date and completes the set. Together they form by far the best history of the Colt revolver yet undertaken. This final volume is priced at \$4.50.

The second of the new gun volumes to appear was Lewis Winant, *Pepperbox Firearms*. In it the author discusses the entire field of multi-barrelled pistols and guns, both muzzle—and breech—loading, of all countries. This is a tremendous field, and since the book is only 192 pages in length, some of the descriptions and comments are briefer than might be desired. It is, however, the only study of its kind ever prepared. It is excellently done and well worth its \$5.50 price.

Finally, John E. Parsons has made another outstanding contribution to the study of American hand guns in his latest book, *Henry Deringer's Pocket Pistol* (William Morrow & Co., \$5.00). Just as the name Colt became synonymous with revolver in many circles, so Deringer came to denote a whole type of short pocket pistols. In this thorough and well documented study, the author examines the origin and development of this pistol that caused its maker's name to become a standard household word.

All of the above books may be obtained at the prices quoted from any regular gun-book-dealer.

★ ★ ★

Somewhat different from the books described above is Frank E. Vandiver, *Ploughshares into Swords* (University of Texas Press, \$5.00). In this volume, the title of which was probably suggested by the famous sword made by the Nashville Plough Works, the author relates

the struggles of the Confederate Ordnance Department to produce and provide the materiel of war for the armies in the field. Despite the fact that there is considerable doubt that the writer knows the technical detail about the construction and functions of many of the products whose manufacture he discusses, and that he doesn't seem to grasp the difference between an arsenal and an armory, the book is a valuable contribution to the study of Confederate arms. The student who already knows the guns themselves will gain from it a new perspective of his favorite field.

★ ★ ★

Although it is not a new publication, the fact that Col. Calvin Goddard's excellent pamphlet on proof tests and proof marks is once again available will be of interest to students and collectors of firearms. The price for the pamphlet is still \$1.00, and it may be obtained from the American Ordnance Association or from any dealer specializing in military books.

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The Company of Military Collectors & Historians is a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of the study of military history and traditions, especially of the United States; and in particular to the diffusion of knowledge of the artifacts and pictorial aspects thereof.

The *Military Collector & Historian* is published quarterly by the Company of Military Collectors & Historians and is sent free to all members. Non-members are charged a subscription price of \$5.00 a year. *Military Uniforms in America*, a series of

hand-colored prints of military and naval costume, is available to subscribers and members for \$12.50 a year extra. Both plates and magazine are published without profit.

All inquiries concerning the Company or subscriptions to the plates and magazine should be addressed to the Secretary, Capt. Charles J. West, TIME, INC., 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y. All correspondence concerning the magazine and plates themselves should be addressed to Col. Frederick P. Todd, Hunting Towers East, Alexandria, Va.

